

DETAILED ACTION***Response to Arguments***

1. Applicant's arguments, see pages 9-11, filed 09 May 2008, with respect to the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) have been fully considered and are persuasive. The rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) have been withdrawn. Examiner agrees with Applicant that the combination of Zeng (USPN 6,522,783 B1) and Braudaway (USPN 5,502,458) does not teach the newly amended limitations requiring that the "index is a hash function of the different input color data" along with the particular manner in which the indexing and input color data is stored. Further, based on Applicant's present arguments, Examiner agrees that Zeng does not teach using a hash function to determine the index in the intermediate table, as formerly cited in claim 2.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 1-27 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Independent claims 1, 13, 18 and 20 each recite either a method [claims 1, 13 and 20] or a device [claim 18] in which an intermediate table for input color data is generated. The intermediate table stores each different value of input color data that is repeated throughout the image along with associated index numbers. Each index number is a hash function of the associated input color data. An intermediate palette is built from the input color data, with a single index value corresponding to each distinct input color data value. The color data in the intermediate palette is converted to output color data. Thus, for an input color data, only the index in the palette is needed to convert the input color data to output color data if the input color data value has occurred elsewhere in the input image. The conversion of the input color data value to the corresponding output color data value does not have to be recomputed. A simple substitution is all that is needed.

The closest prior art discovered is the previously cited combination of Zeng and Braudaway. However, the combination of Zeng and Braudaway does not teach the presently recited features "the index is a hash function of the different input color data" and the storing of each index at a position corresponding to a position in the input color data of the input color data assigned to the index, which is then used in the creation of the intermediate palette. Further, Examiner has found no other prior art which teaches the aforementioned features, either alone or in combination. Accordingly, independent claims 1,

Art Unit: 2625

13, 18 and 20 are each deemed to be allowable over the prior art. Dependant claims 2-12, 14-17, 19 and 21-27 are also deemed allowable at least due to their respective dependencies.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James A. Thompson whose telephone number is (571)272-7441. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30AM-5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward L. Coles can be reached on 571-272-7402. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Edward L. Coles/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2625

James A. Thompson
/J. A. T./
Examiner, Art Unit 2625

08 June 2008